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Preface and Constitution of the Asian Society of Ichthyologists

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The U.S. National Science Foundation-funded (DEB 1022720) ‘All Cypriniformes Species Inventory’ was initiated in 2010 and will be completed in 2015. It has accelerated the rate of discovery and description of cypriniform fishes, expanded our knowledge of the phylogenetic relationships of cypriniforms, increased the capacity for systematic research in other countries through student training and establishing long-term collaborations, including conferences in Thailand in 2012, Brunei in 2013, Burundi in 2013, and Malaysia in 2014, led to the formation of the Asian Society of Ichthyologists, and made available large numbers of specimens and tissues of freshwater fishes, including many species never before collected, in permanent collections in foreign and U.S. institutions.

This volume consists mostly of papers presented at the Asian Fish Biodiversity Conference at the Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, Malaysia, on 11–14 February 2014. The conference was attended by 170 scientists and students from 19 countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, United Kingdom and the United States). In addition to papers from the conference, papers on related studies on fishes of Asia are included in this volume.

A major accomplishment of the conference in Penang was the adoption of a constitution for the Asian Society of Ichthyologists (ASI). A copy of the constitution appears at the end of this preface. The next meeting of ASI will be a joint meeting with the Chinese Ichthyological Society, and the Chinese Zoology Society to be held at the Guilin University of Technology, Guilin, China, on 21–24 August 2015.

In conjunction with the conference, a DNA barcoding workshop was held to introduce a molecular taxonomic tool widely applied in recent years. Participants in the February 2014 conference in Penang are extremely grateful to our local hosts, the Conference Chairperson, Prof. Siti Azizah Mohd Nor, Centre for Research Initiatives-Life Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and her committee comprised of members from USM, Universiti Teknologi MARA and Department of Fisheries Malaysia.

CONSTITUTION OF THE ASIAN SOCIETY OF ICHTHYOLOGISTS

Adopted 11 February 2014

Penang, Malaysia

ARTICLE I: Names and Objectives

1. The name of the society is the ASIAN SOCIETY OF ICHTHYOLOGISTS, hereinafter called the SOCIETY.

2. The Society’s objectives are to:

- A. Promote the understanding, appreciation, wise economic use, and conservation of fishes;
- B. Promote and evaluate the development and advancement of all branches of ichthyology;

C. Gather and disseminate to Society members and the general public scientific, technical, and other information about fishes through publications, meetings, and other forms of communication; and

- D. Encourage the teaching of ichthyology and other forms of biodiversity science in colleges and universities.

ARTICLE II: Membership

Individuals or institutions interested in the Society and its objectives may become members in one of two categories.

A. ACTIVE MEMBERS are individuals with voting rights and who pay dues (if any are required) annually, and their membership extends through the calendar year (only) for which dues are paid.

To initiate the Society in 2014, Active Members will include all who attend the Founding Meeting, and all others at the 2014 Conference who sign a membership list and provide their email addresses.

B. AFFILIATE MEMBERS are individuals or public or private institutions without voting privileges which wish to support the Society and have paid annual calendar-year dues. These include federal, state, provincial, territorial, intergovernmental institutions, and nongovernmental organizations and institutions (NGOs).

ARTICLE III: Officers and Elections

1. Elected Society officers are President, President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and Immediate Past-president.

A. Only Active Members who pledge to attend the next annual meeting of the Society may be nominated for these elective offices.

B. Society officers and committee members shall receive no salary or clerical or other expenses unless approved in advance by the Board.

C. Duties of the elected officers shall be as follows.

i. The President shall be responsible for Society business; make appointments authorized by the Constitution; establish and appoint special committees and consultants as required; and chair all Society and Board meetings.

ii. The President-elect shall assume the duties of the President when that officer is temporarily or permanently unable to act; serve as the Chair of the Arrangements Committee for the next annual Society meeting two years hence.

iii. The Society Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain the Society's official records and collect and receive all monies due or granted to the Society, have custody of Society funds, pay all Society accounts owed and make other expenditures authorized by the Governing Board, and prepare an annual Society budget for Governing Board approval. Minutes of the Board Meeting will be provided electronically by the Secretary within 30 days of the annual meeting.

2. The nomination and election of officers shall be conducted as follows.

A. On or about 90 days before an annual Society meeting, the Secretary shall provide all Active Members a printed or electronic ballot bearing nominations for President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer. Members will be allowed 30 days from the distribution date to return their printed or electronic ballots to the Secretary-Treasurer.

B. Nominations for elective Society offices may be received and processed in two ways.

i. The Nominating Committee is obliged to present an annual slate of candidates. This slate must be announced to the membership at least 30 days before ballots are distributed.

ii. Eligible candidates may be nominated in a petition signed by at least three Active Members and presented to the Secretary at least 30 days before the election.

C. The nominee receiving the largest number of votes for each office is elected. If a tie occurs, the Board makes the selection by a majority vote. Results of the election are announced electronically to all Active Members.

D. Terms of office are one year. The elected officers are installed in office during the annual Society meeting immediately following their election, except as indicated below.

At the installation, the current President-elect and President automatically become President and Immediate Past-president, respectively. The four officers retain office until the next annual Society meeting. (To launch the Society in 2014, nominations will be made at the Founding Meeting. A majority vote of all at the meeting will elect, with terms starting immediately: President, President-elect to serve as President-Elect (then as President), Secretary-Treasurer.)

If a valid election of officers occurs but the annual Society meeting is canceled or postponed more than one month, new officers will be installed without formal ceremony at the originally scheduled time of the meeting. Should an annual Society meeting be postponed one month or less, the transition of officers will occur at that meeting, as usual.

If an election of new officers cannot be completed before that year's annual Society meeting, the installation and transition of officers shall occur without formal ceremony as soon after the meeting as election results are validated. Current officers and appointed committee members retain their positions and responsibilities until that time.

If an elected officer cannot complete the term of office, the Board may appoint a replacement until an election can be held. A vacated presidency shall be filled by the President-elect, who will continue as President through the normal term.

ARTICLE IV: Governing Board

The Governing Board is the ultimate authority for the operation of the Society, deciding policy for the Society, authorizing its operations, and making financial decisions. The Society's President chairs meetings of the Governing Board.

1. The Governing Board comprises the four elected officers (3 in the first year) and 16 additional active members. The number of additional members may be increased by 2/3 vote of the Board, with new members to be elected at the next annual meeting.

A. Board Members who are not officers are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected during the annual meeting. No more than two members of the Governing Board, excluding the officers, may be from the same country.

B. One-third of Board members constitutes a quorum.

C. Except for Society officers, members of the Board may be represented at a Board meeting by any individual of their choice, provided such alternates are designated in writing to the President before the meeting. Alternates have full voting powers.

D. The Board meets in conjunction with the annual Society meeting. Board may vote on matters of Society business at other times of the year electronically.

E. The Board decides Society policies, approves the annual budget, and transacts other necessary Society business.

ARTICLE V: Meetings and Voting

A. The Society shall meet once a year. The Board sets the time and place of the annual meeting, and may do so one or more years in advance. Meetings are conducted according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Twenty-five percent of Active Members constitutes a quorum for transaction of Society business at annual or special meetings.

C. Decisions and voting at Society meetings shall be as follows.

i. Decisions at meetings are by simple majority of Active Members voting, except 2/3 majorities are required to amend the Constitution or suspend a Rule.

ii. Any Active Member who cannot attend a Society meeting may request the President, in writing, to register her or his vote on a previously published question. Such proxy votes must be assigned before the meeting at which the question is considered, and may not be used to establish a quorum.

E. Business and voting may be conducted via mail or electronic mail instead of at Society or Board meetings. An electronic vote must be approved by the President, or the Officers, or Governing Board, as appropriate for the issue being considered.

ARTICLE VI: Dues, Fees, and Charges

A. The Governing Board may determine, by a 2/3 majority vote, all Society dues, fees, and charges.

- i. Annual dues and categories of membership are set by the Governing Board.
- ii. Full-time students, certified as such by a faculty member at their institution, pay no more than one-half the general dues.

B. All monies due the Society shall be remitted to the Secretary-Treasurer in U.S. currency or the equivalent in the currency of another country.

ARTICLE VII: Standing Committees

1. Standing Committees help the President and the Governing Board conduct the Society's affairs. The President shall appoint and charge the chairs and members of all standing committees within 30 days after the annual Society meeting unless otherwise specified. The President may delegate authority to the chair to appoint members. All appointees must be Active Members, and their terms of duty extend to the end of the next annual meeting if not stipulated otherwise. Standing Committee chairs should report their committees' activities, findings, and recommendations at annual and interim meetings of the Board.

2. The Society has established the following standing committees:

A. NOMINATING COMMITTEE names a slate of candidates for the Society offices of President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer according to procedures approved by the Governing Board.

B. ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE makes the physical arrangements for the annual Society meeting, administers registration, collects all fees, and generates publicity for the meeting. The Chair also serves as General Chair for the annual Society meeting, providing overall coordination of the other committees related to the annual meeting of the Society, and assembles and administers the program for the annual Society meeting. The Chair is selected at least one year prior to the meeting.

3. In addition,

C. A MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE may be established to provide to maintain Society membership and take appropriate measures to attract new members.

D. A CONSERVATION COMMITTEE may be established to provide leadership for the Society on issues affecting endangered species and their ecosystems, and help the Society evaluate and develop resource policies by assessing concerns of the membership, by advising the President about aquatic resource issues, and by producing or coordinating draft resource policy statements for Society approval.

E. An ELECTRONIC SERVICES COMMITTEE may be established to provide oversight and coordination for electronic membership services, including those pertaining to ASI meetings and the content and structure of an ASI web site.

F. An AWARDS COMMITTEE may be established by the Board.

G. A RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE may be established to draft resolutions, screen and edit resolutions submitted to it by officers, members, or units, and upon approval of the Governing Board, presents its slate of resolutions for vote at the annual Society meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: Constitution, Rules and Procedures

1. Constitution: The Constitution is the defining document for the Society. It takes precedence over all other rules and procedures of the Society. It cannot be suspended, unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, and it cannot be changed without prior notice to members.

A. The Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority of Active Members who vote on an amendment.

B. Amendments passed during an annual Society meeting take effect at the close of that meeting. Amendments passed at other times take effect at the close of the first subsequent annual meeting.

C. Amendments may be proposed and considered if they have been brought before an annual or special Society meeting, if they have been provided to the membership by the President at least 30 days before that meeting and if they have been proposed either by 2/3 vote of the Governing Board or a validated petition signed by at least 15 Active Members.

2. Rules: Rules are the next highest level of documentation of Society operations. They are generally established to facilitate the conduct of Society business, and to describe duties and responsibilities of officers and staff in that context. They may be suspended or amended as follows, unless otherwise specified in the Constitution.

A. The Rules may be suspended until the next annual or special Society meeting by a 2/3 majority of the Governing Board.

B. The Rules may be suspended for the duration of a meeting by a 2/3 majority of Active Members voting at an annual or special Society meeting.

C. The Rules may be amended by a simple majority of Active Members voting at an annual or special Society meeting.

The agenda for an annual Society business meeting shall include at least the following.

- A. Call to order by the President
- B. Determination of a quorum
- C. Introduction of guests and visitors
- D. Address of the President
- E. Financial Report
- F. Report of the Resolutions Committee
- G. Report of the Vote Auditor
- H. Other old business
- I. Installation of new officers
- J. New business
- K. Adjournment

ARTICLE IX: Conflict of Interests

It is the policy of ASI that the Board and officers are expected to avoid any actual or apparent conflict between their own personal interests and the interests of the Society.

ARTICLE X: Publications

The Society may decide to publish a journal.

Ratified by unanimous vote of Founding Members on 11 Feb. 2014

Siti Azizah Mohd Nor, Malaysia, President

Yahui Zhao, China, President-Elect

Larry M. Page, USA, Secretary

Shobnom Ferdous,

Zohrah Haji Sulaiman

Nam So

E Zhang

M. Arunachalam

Muchlisin Zainal Abidin

Daniel N. Lumbantobing

Chavalit Vidthayanon

Ronelie C. Chato-Salvador

Tan Heok Hui

Wei-Jen Chen

Apinun Suvarnaraksha

Chaiwut Grudpan

Thai Ngoc Tri

Kenzo Utsugi

Showket Ahmad Brat